

DESK PAD ORGANIZER SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field

[0001] The present invention relates generally desktop accessories, and more particularly to
5 a planning and organizational aid for the desktop.

2. Background Art

[0002] Various items and implements normally associated with working at a desk include pens, pencils, paper clips, notepads, adhesive-backed notes, push pins, rubber bands, and the like. Such items and implements are hereinafter referred to as "desktop items."

10 [0003] Systems for organizing and holding desktop items have been proposed, as evidenced by the following U.S. patents: U.S. Patent 4,768,298 to Polhemus et al.; U.S. Patent 4,570,793 to O'Neil et al.; and U.S. Patent 4,176,743 to Fitzpatrick. These patents disclose modular and reconfigurable organizing systems. The patents to Polhemus and Fitzpatrick also disclose the use of day calendars in conjunction with such systems. However, none of these patents suggests the
15 concept of joining a desk pad or supplementary work surface to an organizing system. Thus, the systems disclosed in these patents are somewhat limited in utility.

[0004] Desk pads and supplementary work surfaces (i.e., supplementary to the desktop) have been propose, as evidenced by the following U.S. patents: U.S. Patent 5,154,498 to Slater; U.S. Patent 5,123,191 to Kim; and U.S. Patent 5,022,170 to House. The patents to Slater and House
20 disclose the concept of including an organizing tray (for desktop items) along with a supplementary work surface; and Kim discloses the use of a calendar desk pad which also serves as a work surface. However, these patents fail to recognize the utility of joining a desk organizing tray with a desk pad. Also, the organizing trays in Slater and House are built into the work surface, thus selection of a particular desk pad for use with the trays is impossible. The term "desk pad," as used herein means
25 a writing pad or tablet large enough to also serve as a supplementary work surface.

[0005] Wall-mount systems that juxtapose wire-bound calendars with organizing trays have been employed, as evidenced by U.S. Patent 5,948,498 to Bianco et al. However, such systems would not be suitable for desktop applications, because they do not present a large enough work surface. In addition, the calendar is not fixedly connected to the organizing tray, thus each
30 component could be separated and displaced.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a desk pad organizer system that avoids the limitations and problems associated with the prior art.

[0007] It is another object of the present invention to provide a desk pad organizer system
5 that includes an organizer tray for organizing and holding desktop items and includes a desk pad.

[0008] It is a further object of the present invention to provide a desk organizer tray that allows the user to select a particular desk pad to be used with the tray.

[0009] It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a desk pad organizer system that can be manufactured by a process alternative to injection molding or vacuum forming.

10 [0010] It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a desk pad organizer system that is easily and cost effectively manufactured.

[0011] These and other objects are attained in accordance with the present invention, wherein there is provided a desk organizer tray. The desk organizer tray comprises a tray portion, an extension portion, and an attachment element applied to the extension portion. The tray portion
15 contains a receptacle for holding desktop items. The tray portion is constructed of a plurality of superimposed board members, each of which contains a hole pattern. The hole patterns of the board members are in registration with one another to form the receptacle. The extension portion includes a board member that extends from the tray portion. The board members of the tray portion are mounted on the board member of the extension portion. The attachment element is applied to the
20 board member of the extension portion. The attachment element serves to attach a desk pad to the extension portion, adjacent to the tray portion.

[0012] In one embodiment, the length of the board member of the extension portion is substantially less than the length of the desk pad to be attached. In another embodiment, the length of the board member of the extension portion is substantially equal to the length of the desk pad to
25 be attached. In the latter embodiment, the board member of the extension portion can serve as a backer for a desk pad.

[0013] A method of assembling a desk pad organizer system is also contemplated by the present invention. The method comprises the steps of: (a) providing a desk pad; (b) providing a desk organizer tray including a tray portion, an extension portion, and an adhesive element applied
30 to the extension portion; and (c) applying the desk pad to the adhesive element on the extension portion and locating the desk pad adjacent to the tray portion.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0014] Further objects of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is an exploded view showing the construction of one embodiment of a desk organizer tray of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top plan view of an assembled desk organizer tray of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a side elevation view of the desk organizer tray of FIG. 2;

FIG. 3A is a cross-sectional view of the desk organizer tray of FIG. 2, taken along line 3A-3A in FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of a desk organizer tray of the present invention, shown with a calendar desk pad;

FIG. 5 is a top plan view of the desk organizer tray of FIG. 4, with the calendar desk pad installed thereon; and

FIG. 6 is a side elevation view of the desk organizer tray of FIG. 4.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0015] Referring now to FIGS. 1-3 and 3A, a first embodiment of the present invention is shown. A desk organizer tray 10 (FIG. 2) comprises a tray 12, an extension member 14 extending from tray 12, and an attachment element 15 applied to extension member 14. Tray 12 contains several receptacles 16a-16g for holding various desktop items.

[0016] Receptacle 16a is configured and dimensioned to closely receive and hold a pad of adhesive-backed notes (see FIG. 5). The opening to receptacle 16a is defined by a perimeter 17a which contains two opposed finger recesses 18a. Receptacle 16b is configured as a pen and pencil tray, and contains four recesses 17b to cradle pens, pencil or other writing implements (see FIG. 5). Receptacles 16c-16e and 16g are general purpose receptacles for holding such items as push pins, rubber bands, paper clips, coins, and the like (see FIG. 5). Receptacle 16f is configured and dimensioned to closely receive and hold a notepad (see FIG. 5). The opening to receptacle 16f is defined by a perimeter 17f which contains three finger recesses 18f. Finger recesses 18a and 18f are each configured and dimensioned to accept a person's finger and facilitate manual removal of, e.g., a note pad from receptacles 16a and 16f.

[0017] Attachment element 15 is preferably an adhesive element such as a strip of double-sided tape, glue or a pressure sensitive adhesive substance. As shown, attachment element 15 is

preferably applied directly to extension member 14, in the form of a neat band or strip. The purpose of attachment element 15 is to provide a means for attaching a desk pad to extension 14 and for locating the desk pad adjacent to tray 12. This is shown, for a second embodiment, in FIG. 4.

[0018] As best shown in FIG. 1, tray 12 is constructed of three superimposed boards 12a, 12b and 12c. Boards 12a, 12b and 12c contain die-cut hole patterns 20a, 20b and 20c, respectively. As boards 12a-12c are superimposed, hole patterns 20a-20c are in registration with one another to form receptacles 16a-16g. Boards 12a-12c are preferably made of 50 pt black chipboard material or EVA foam material, and they are laminated or glued together to form a single article. The lengths, L1, L2 and L3, of boards 12a-12c are the same, so they form a flat face 22 when assembled (see FIG. 3). Extension member 14 is constructed from a single board 14a (FIG. 1). The completed assembly of boards 12a-12c is laminated or glued onto board 14a. Board 14a serves as a floor for receptacles 16a-16g. Board 14a has a length L4 that is greater than lengths L1-L3 of boards 12a-12c. Board 14a extends from tray 12 by a distance, L4 minus L1. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1-3 and 3A, board 14a extends from tray 12 a length that is substantially less than the length of a desk pad to be attached to board 14a.

[0019] FIG. 4 shows a calendar desk pad 24. Pad 24 includes a number of sheets of paper of the same size, each printed with a calendar month, stacked one on top of the other and bound together at a top end 24a. At a bottom end 24b, the monthly calendar sheets are loose. Each sheet may be torn from pad 24 at perforations (not shown) near top end 24a.

[0020] In the embodiment of FIGS. 1-3 and 3A, calendar desk pad 24 is attached to board 14a by applying top end 24a to attachment element 15. Pad 24 is oriented such that top end 24a abuts face 22 of tray 12 (FIG. 3). Manual pressure is applied to top end 24a to achieve an adhesive bond between pad 24 and board 14a. In this embodiment, it is preferred that calendar pad 24 have its own stiff backer. In the second embodiment of the present invention (FIGS. 4-6), the extension member serves as a stiff backer for the desk pad.

[0021] Referring to FIGS. 4-6, the second embodiment of the present invention is shown. A desk organizer tray 110 comprises a tray 112, an extension member 114, and an attachment element 115. Tray 112 contains several receptacles 116a-116g for holding various desktop items. The second embodiment is identical to the first embodiment (FIGS. 1-3 and 3A), except that extension member 114 extends from tray 112 a length substantially equal to the length of calendar desk pad 24. Desk organizer tray 110 is also constructed of chipboards as described with respect to the first embodiment (FIG. 6).

[0022] Extension member 114 is made of a single rectangular-shaped chipboard 114a (FIG. 4). Attachment element 115 is preferably an adhesive strip, and is applied to board 114a, near tray 112, as shown in FIG. 4. Board 114a has a distal end 114b terminating at a pair of corners 114c and 114d. A pair of corner pockets 114e and 114f are mounted at corners 114c and 114d, respectively. Pockets 114e and 114f receive the corners of bottom end 24b of calendar pad 24 and retain the loose ends of the calendar sheets flat against board 114a (See FIG. 5). In this embodiment, a desk pad without a stiff backer may be used, because board 114a serves as the backer.

[0023] As shown in FIG. 5, receptacles 116a-116g each contain a desktop item or items. Receptacle 116a contains an adhesive-backed note pad 126; receptacle 116b contains a pencil 128 and a pen 130; receptacle 116c contains push pins 132; receptacle 116d contains rubber bands 134; receptacle 116e contains paper clips 136; receptacle 116f contains a notepad 138; and receptacle 116g contains coins 140. Receptacles 116a and 116f each contain a pair of opposed finger recesses 118a and 118f, respectively, which facilitate manual removal of note pads 126 and 138. Receptacle 116f contains a third finger recess 118f, oriented at right angles to the other two recesses. This third recess offers further assistance with manual removal of notepad 138.

[0024] As with the first embodiment, the second embodiment is assembled by locating top end 24a of calendar pad 24 adjacent to tray 112 and applying end 24a down against adhesive strip 115. By applying pressure to end 24a, a secure adhesive bond between calendar pad 24 and extension member 114 is achieved. The two distal corners of pad 24 (at end 24b) are then inserted into corner pockets 114e and 114f.

[0025] As indicated above, attachment elements 15 and 115 are preferably implemented as an adhesive strip, such as double-sided tape or a glue strip. The exposed adhesive surface of attachment elements 15 and 115 is protected by a wax paper strip (not shown) or other suitable substrate that can be easily removed without upsetting the adhesive surface. Just prior to installation of desk pad 24 onto tray 12 or tray 112, the wax paper strip or substrate is removed.

[0026] While the preferred embodiments of the invention have been particularly described in the specification and illustrated in the drawings, it should be understood that the invention is not so limited. Many modifications, equivalents and adaptations of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, as defined in the appended claims.